

great and noble thing. The sentence is, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." The notable thing which he did was the commissioning of the twelve to go forth and preach the gospel of the kingdom, giving them power to expel demons and cure diseases. The commission and the sending forth of the twelve constitute today's lesson.

#### Meaning of the Text

2. *The twelve.* Corresponding with the twelve tribes of Israel. *Apostles.* Signifying "one sent forth," a messenger. In v. 1, they are called disciples, that is learners. They must be disciples before they can be apostles. *Peter*, the rock, and *Andrew* were brothers. See John 1:35-45. *James-John*, were also brothers, and because of "their fiery, vehement temperament," were designated by Jesus, Boanerges, sons of thunder.

3, 4. *Bartholomew*, Nathaniel of John 1:45. *James* "is a modernized form of Jacob." *Lebbeus* is the same as Judas the son of James. Luke 6:16. *Judas.* The only one of the disciples who was not a Galilean.

5, 6. *Sent forth.* They had been with him on two previous tours thro Galilee and had learned of him. Now they are sent forth alone. This was a necessary part of their training. The work too had enlarged and was too much for Jesus alone. *Way of the Gentiles.* The time had not come to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. The apostles were not ready for that until after Pentecost. *Lost sheep.* The Jews, whom God had been preparing for this event for many generations. They were as lost sheep, having no shepherd to care for them.

7, 8. *As ye go.* As opportunity presents itself. *Preach.* Herald the glad tidings. *The kingdom—at hand.* The king had come and was about to establish his kingdom with its laws and principles. *Heal the sick.* Their mission was a twofold one, ministering to the body and soul. *Received—give.* The power to do good, to preach the gospel, to heal the sick, etc., these were from God, and as they had received so they were to give.

9, 10. *Gold, etc.* They were not to take even the smallest piece of money. Nor were they to take extra clothing, or things to eat. "They were to go forth and let the people for whom they labored support them. They did not receive this support as beggars, because they really earned it." While they were exhorted to give freely, their hearers were to give no less freely.

11, 13. *Inquire.* Their work was not to be done in a haphazard way, but systematically. They were to exercise care so as not to get into unnecessary trouble. *Worthy.* "Worthy of your intimacy, worthy of being associated with you in your evangelistic work." They must not lodge with those whose character would bring scandal on their profession.—*Sadler.* *There abide.* They were not to interfere with family arrangements, nor were they to spend their time in

visiting from house to house. There was system about their work as outlined by Christ. *Salute it.* Give the usual salutation of the day, "Peace be unto you." *Peace—upon it.* Their very presence would be a benediction and blessing to the home. *Peace return.* If not worthy they would not remain and thus the family would lose the blessed peace that comes thro the apostles' presence.

#### The Lesson Applied

1. *Called First.*—By reference to the first verse of this chapter you will find that before Christ sent these disciples forth upon their mission, he called them to himself and gave them power. They started at the Master's feet, and there is the place where all of us should start. We are not ready to go out for Christ until we have come to Christ. We must come to him to catch the inspiration of his life, we must learn of him, take lessons in the school of love and service. It is not enough that the minister has gone to college and seminary; it is not enough that he has been called by the church; there must be that higher call from God and the blessed nearness to Christ. We need to come to Christ for power. That is what he gave his disciples. He did not give them money or worldly possessions, but he did give them power, and that is just what we need when we go out into the world to do service for the Master. He will give us that power no less than he gave it to his disciples. He gives it for the asking.

2. *Names of the Twelve.*—They were not prominent names. Many people in that community had never heard of those names before. They were not famous men. They were plain, ordinary fishermen, and had little of this world's goods. But these men became great and powerful in the world for good; their influence has been felt everywhere. They lived with Christ three years, taking lessons from him, they lived close to his side, and tho they often misunderstood him, yet daily they were learning of him. He poured the light and love of his holy life into their sinful lives, and thus stamped his own impress upon them. What a power they became in the world. Let us live close to Jesus, drink from that fountain of life and love and light, and then go out and repeat the life and teachings of Jesus, in our own and the world will be the better for our having lived in it.

3. *As Ye Go Preach.*—Here is a lesson for all of us in wayside ministries. "As ye go preach," said Jesus to his disciples. That is just what we want and ought to be doing. As we go from place to place in this world of sin and sorrow let us scatter rays of sunshine. Oh, there is so much to do; the gospel is to be preached, the sick cared for. Let us arise and go hence.

#### To Make You Think

1. What were the names of the twelve? 2. Why were there twelve? 3. How did they differ in character and disposition? 4. Were they educated men? 5. From what country were most of the twelve? 6. Why

from Galilee? 7. What were the occupations of the twelve? 8. What was their commission? 9. Where were they to go? 10. Why to Israel only? 11. What message were they to proclaim? 12. What provision were they to make for the journey? 13. What were they not to do? 14. How were they to deal with unbelievers? 15. What support were they promised? 16. Was this the final commission to the twelve? 17. What other commission was given them? 18. When was it given them? 19. How did it differ from this one? 20. What is the church's commission today?

#### Thoughts for Young People

##### Blessings of the Gospel

1. *The Gospel brings to men comfort in their troubles.* All people have troubles, but only those who believe in Christ can be sure of comfort in them.

2. *The Gospel brings to men inheritance in the earth.* People are everywhere seeking to become owners of the soil and masters of the earth! The child of God is the only one who is sure of a lasting possession.

3. *The Gospel brings to men satisfaction.* People are thirsting, but few are satisfied. The seeker after God will obtain all he desires.

4. *The Gospel brings to men mercy.* Some people find the world selfish and hard; but he who gives kindness obtains favor.

5. *The Gospel brings to men fellowship with God.* Those who keep their hearts pure can enjoy communion with the highest.

6. *The Gospel brings to men sonship.* People find themselves far from God; but thro Christ they may receive the adoption of sons.

#### Outline for Teachers

This lesson instructs Jesus's messengers:

1. Where and how to go forth. 2. How to meet men . . . . The story shows (1) that Christ preferred simple-hearted men without pretentious paraphernalia; (2) that his messengers were to bring blessings with them—on every hand and healing and joy; (3) that he did not intend to secure them unvarying success, but sent them in the face of persecution. . . . Or treat the lesson thus: 1. The men: not angels, but simple-hearted, believing, trained. 2. The mission: at home first, then abroad. 3. The message: the kingdom of heaven is at hand. 4. The token: the warrant for their authority was their miracles. 5. The spirit required: (1) Self-denying; (2) Trusting; (3) Single-hearted; (4) Faithful.

Shall the Christian fear the tomb? Christ lay there. Shall he shudder at the approach of death? It is but the slave of Christ come to lead him into the Master's presence.

A tool is something that we work with. As Christians we need a tool that shall really help us in performing something well pleasing unto. "Death and life are in the power of the tongue."